

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5414

PARTIAL VETO C 310 L 09

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding statewide assessments and curricula.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, King, Oemig and McDermott).

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

House Committee on Education

House Committee on Education Appropriations

Background: Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). In order to obtain a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA), high school students are required to meet the state standard on the tenth grade WASL in reading, writing, and mathematics. Until 2013, a student who does not meet the state standard on the mathematics WASL may graduate from high school without a CAA if they continue to take mathematics classes and annually take either the mathematics WASL or an approved mathematics alternative. Beginning with the graduating class of 2013 students must also meet the state standards on the science WASL.

Revised Mathematics and Science Standards. In 2007 the Legislature directed the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to conduct a comprehensive review and revision of the state learning standards in mathematics and science. The final mathematics standards for high school were approved for adoption in July 2008. The new science standards have been completed but can be adopted only after the 2009 Legislature has had an opportunity for review.

End-of-Course Assessments (EOCs). Legislation was passed in 2008 directing SPI to develop statewide EOCs for Algebra I, Geometry, Integrated Mathematics I, and Integrated mathematics II, to be used as the high school level mathematics WASL. The mathematics EOCs were to be available for optional use in the 2009-10 school year and implemented statewide in the 2010-11 school year.

Science Curricula. In 2007 the Legislature directed the SPI to identify no more than three science curricula for elementary, middle, and high school grade spans that align with the new science standards and present them to SBE for formal comment by May 15, 2009. By June 30, 2009, the SBE must comment and make recommendations for any changes to SPI prior to

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SPI adopting the curricula. Subject to funding, at least one of the curricula must be available online at no cost to schools and parents.

Legislative WASL Working Group. In 2008 the Legislature created a working group on the WASL composed of seven legislative members to review and evaluate the current assessment system by January 1, 2009, and potentially make recommendations to improve it. The working group met six times and heard presentations from a number of national and local experts, other states, and local school districts. Each meeting consisted of a work session with an opportunity provided for public comment.

The working group developed both long-term and short-term recommendations. The long-term recommendations start with a list of principles that should be established as legislative intent for the design of a new assessment system. The principles include that an assessment system should improve and inform classroom instruction, support accountability, and provide useful information for all levels of the educational system. Additionally, the assessment system must include multiple formats, (including formative, summative, and classroom-based assessments), enable comparisons of student achievement, and be balanced. Key design elements were identified by the working group.

The long-term recommendations also provide that pre-service and ongoing training should be supplied to teachers and administrators on the effective use of different types of assessments, in order to sustain a strong and viable assessment system; and as the statewide data system is developed, data should be collected for all state-required statewide assessments to be used for accountability and to monitor overall student achievement.

The working group developed five short-term recommendations:

1. SPI should revise the current WASL to reduce the number of open-ended/extended response questions at all grade levels and report back to the Legislature on the changes and provide cost information.
2. The reading and writing WASL and the mathematics EOCs should be maintained as graduation requirements. However, the timelines should be adjusted to use EOCs as a graduation requirement effective when the SBE finds that EOCs are valid and reliable. Additionally, EOCs should be considered for science with the use of the science assessment as a graduation requirement effective when the SBE finds the science assessment valid and reliable.
3. SPI should revisit and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding alternative assessments, the appeals process (including considering local school district authority), and the special education portfolio.
4. To address college and career readiness, the state should pay for students to take the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test if the student has passed the high school WASL; and SBE should examine EALRs to determine how to improve alignment of Essential Academic Learning Requirements with college and career readiness and SBE's draft high school credit framework called CORE 24.
5. SPI, with SBE, should begin design on an assessment system that meets the long-term recommendations, conduct a cost analysis, and report back to the Legislature.

Summary: Some of the recommendations of the legislative WASL work group are implemented; a plan is required to ensure students have the opportunity to learn the new

mathematics and science standards; the mathematics EOCs and implementation timeline are addressed; a recommendation will be made on science EOCs; and the science curricula to be recommended by SPI is expanded within specified science domains.

WASL. Legislative findings are made that an assessment system should improve and inform classroom instruction, support accountability, and provide useful information to all levels of the educational system; and that the Legislature intends to redesign the current statewide system, in accordance with the recommendations of the legislative WASL work group.

Beginning December 1, 2009, the SPI and SBE must jointly annually report to the Legislature regarding the assessment system, including a cost analysis of any changes and costs to expand availability and use of instructionally supportive formative assessments. SPI is directed to revise the number of open-ended questions and extended responses in the WASL in grades three through eight and ten while retaining the validity and reliability of the assessment. By December 1, 2009, SPI must report to the Legislature regarding the changes, including the costs.

By December 1, 2009, SPI must revisit the alternative assessments, the appeals process (including considering authorizing local school districts to determine the outcome of an appeal by a student), and the alternative assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and make recommendations for improvements to the Legislature.

Revised Mathematics and Science Standards. SPI, with the SBE, and the Professional Educators Standards Board must develop an implementation plan to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn the new science and mathematics standards. The plan must include strategies to help districts improve alignment of curriculum and teacher instruction to the new standards; identify effective programs for struggling students; and assess the feasibility of implementing the current timelines for students to demonstrate that they have met state mathematics and science standards on the statewide high school assessments for the purpose of graduation. By December 1, 2009, SPI must report the plan to the Governor and the Legislature.

EOCs. The requirement to implement the mathematics EOCs at the high school level in the 2010-2011 school year is maintained. The first year of the EOCs are to include the standards common to Algebra I and Integrated Mathematics I. The second year of the EOCs are to include the standards common to Geometry and Integrated Mathematics II. The graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 may use either the EOC results or the results from the high school mathematics WASL to obtain a CAA. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, the EOCs will be the mathematics WASL for the purposes of obtaining a CAA.

OSPI must also develop subtests for the EOCs that measure standards that are unique to Algebra I, Integrated Mathematics I, Geometry, and Integrated Mathematics II. The results are to be reported at the student, teacher, school, and district level.

By December 1, 2009, SPI, with the SBE, must recommend whether to use a comprehensive assessment or EOCs for assessing whether high school students have met the state science standards.

Science Curricula. The timeline is extended for SPI to present science curricula to the SBE and for the SBE to provide comment. SPI must present no more than three curricula for each of the major high school courses in the domains of earth and space science, physical science, and life science.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| Senate | 47 | 1 | |
| House | 95 | 2 | (House amended) |
| Senate | 46 | 0 | (Senate concurred) |

Effective: April 30, 2009 (Section 5)
July 26, 2009

Partial Veto Summary: The Governor vetoed the requirement for a plan to be developed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn the new science and mathematics standards, including assessing the feasibility of the current timelines for students to demonstrate that they have met the state standards for the purpose of graduation. Additionally, the Governor vetoed the direction that SPI, with the SBE, recommend whether to use a comprehensive assessment or EOCs to determine whether high school students have met the state science standards.